Proposal to improve relations with Sri Lanka

338. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to improve relations with Sri Lanka;

(b) whether Government are also taking steps to solve the ethnic problem in that country;

(c) if so, the details of the steps taken in the matter;

(d) whether the matter figured in the talks between both the countries, Foreign Ministers in their last meeting at Sri Lanka; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) It has always been Government's policy to have friendly and close bilateral relations with Sri Lanka.

(b) and (c) The ethnic problem in Sri Lanka is ultimately a matter to be settled between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamils. Government have again conveyed to the Sri Lankan Government that only a negotiated political settlement legitimate Tamil demands can lead to a lasting solution of the ethnic problem.

(d) Yes, sir.

(e) We urged the Sri Lanka Government to pursue measures to bring parties concerned to the negotiating table. While expressing concern over the large presence of Sri Lanka refugees in India, we also stressed the need for the Sri Lanka Government to create conditions for the voluntary and early return of refugees presently in India.

Convention of Indian Muslims in America

339. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's Ambassador to the United States of America attended a Convention of Indian Muslims in America held at Maryland on 23rd and 24th November, 1990;

(b) whether some of the resolutions passed at the Convention condemned India for discrimatory practices against Indian Muslims; and

(c) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by Government so that such incidents do not recur in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) The Indian Ambassador to the United States attended a dinner on 24th November, 1990 which was the concluding function of the Convention of Indian Muslims in America held at Maryland. The Convention itself was spread over two days, i.e. 23rd and 24th November, 1990.

(b) Yes sir. A resolution was passed on the conclusion of the Convention condemning "the discriminatory practices" with respect to educational and employment opportunities for Indian Muslims in general and Kashmir Muslims in perticular.

(c) When the Ambassador heard the resolution, which was read out after his own speech, he intervened to stress on the need for Muslims to join the mainstream and look at their success stories and not merely keep talking about the allegations of discrimination. The Ambassador also reaffirmed India's enduring committment to secularism.

Expansion of telecommunication services

340. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to expand telecommunication services in States during the Eighth Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to expand telecommunication network in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu during Eighth Five Year Plan period?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PARKASH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The draft 8th five year plan envisages substantial expansion of telecommunication services in the country. During this period, it is proposed to reach more than double the number of connections available at the beginning of the 8th plan by expanding services by another 52 lakh new connections. The expansion has been planned keeping in view the guidelines:

(i) Provide telephone on demand by 31-3-95 for all telephone exchanges of capacity below 5000 lines.

(ii) To contain the waiting list on an average to one year period by 31-3-95 in all telephone exchanges of capacity 5000 lines or more.

The State-wise break-up of expansion of telephone capacity to give new phone connections is given in the Statement.

In addition, for the rural areas it has been proposed to provide one telephone connection in each of nearly 2.21 lakh Panchayats in the country.

(c) It has been proposed in the draft 8th Plan to provide around 97000 lines of Switching Capacity with 87000 phone connections and around 10700 Long Distance Public Telephones in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu to expand existing rural telecommunications network. Accordingly action has been taken for the allotment of equipments.

Statement

Statewise break-up of expansion of telephone capacity to provide telephone connections

S. No.	Name of the Circle	Net Capacity addition	Long Distance Public Telephones to be provided
1	2	3	4
1	Andhra Pradesh	268500	14672
2	Hyderabad District	113100	
3	Assam	89900	43
4	Bihar	153600	8373
5	Gujarat	372200	11987
6	Ahmedabad District	147900	
7	Haryana	207500	4981
8	Himachal Pradesh	67400	2498
9	Jammu & Kashmir	48400	1177
10	Karnataka	226000	7177
11	Bangalore Distt.	185100	
12	Kerala	459200	883
13	Madhya Pradesh	276800	15627

1	2	3	4
14	Maharashtra	388700	22623
15	Pune Distt.	107000	
16	North East	75300	1202
17	Orissa	89300	3136
18	Punjab	261200	10621
19	Rajasthan	166600	5550
20	Jaipur Distt.	61000	
21	Tamilnadu	234700	10710
22	Uttar Pradesh	292400	70236
23	Kanpur Distt.	Included in U.P.	
24	West Bengal	56400	2383
25	Delhi MTNL	614800	N l
26	Bombay MTNL;	712600	Nil
27	Calcutta Tele. Distt.	69300	Nil.
28	Madras Tele. Dis t.	122100	Nil
	TOTAL	5867000	193793

Waiting list of telephone connections at Madras

341. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN. Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of persons on the waiting list for telephone connections at Madras upto January, 1991;

(b) what steps are being taken by Government for providing new telephone connections from each exchange; and

(c) the time by when the telephone connections are likely to be provided to all the enlisted persons?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PARKASH): (a) Waiting list position as on 31-1-91 is:

OYT	— 5923
Non OYT	— 63760
Total :	69683

(b) and (c) The draft 8th Plan has been formulated with an objective to contain by the end of 8th Five Year Plan, the waiting list to one year on an average in exchanges of capacities of 5000 lines and above. With this objective, expansion plans are drawn for clearing the waiting list progressively/during the 8th Plan period.

Central allocation for irrigation facilities in rural areas

342. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN. Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the allocation made by the Central Government for providing irrigation facilities in rural areas during 1990-91 and the amount asked for by the States for this purpose, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): A Statement is enclosed.